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SUBJECT: HONDURAN ELECTIONS NEWS: UPDATE 8

REF: (A) Tegucigalpa 2055

- (B) Tegucigalpa 2051
- (C) Tegucigalpa 1984
- (D) Tegucigalpa 1968
- (E) Tegucigalpa 1949
- (F) Tegucigalpa 1680
- (G) Tegucigalpa 1665

National ID Card to Cost \$16 for Replacement

¶11. The National Register of Persons (RNP) is considering charging 300 lempiras (USD 15.9) for renewing a national identity card. The RNP is planning to do this in view of the growing costs of this service. According to the RNP, more than 70 percent of the national identity cards are replacements for lost cards. Some of these ID cards have been "lost" by the owner of the card up to ten times. Replacing the card free of charge places undue costs on the GOH, and may help facilitate fraud. First time requests for ID cards will remain free under this proposal. The RNP already charges a small amount for certain documents, including ID cards when they are requested for the purpose of travel. In 2005, over 400,000 ID cards have been reissued due to loss and RNP authorities believe that by the end of the year that the number may rise to 700,000.

Prosecutors Charge Daughter of Minor Presidential Candidate

¶12. The Office of the Attorney General on Common Crimes brought charges against Alejandra Maria Martinez Midence, the 28-year-old daughter of Juan Ramon Martinez, presidential candidate for the Christian Democratic Party, accusing her of aggravated homicide. The preliminary audiences will be held during the third week of October. In the meantime, the accused has collaborated with the investigations so the Attorney General's office decided not to order mandatory jail for Martinez Midence.

¶13. According to investigations and the testimony of witnesses, Martinez Midence was driving from Tegucigalpa to Santa Lucia under the influence, in the company of two other people, when she hit Carlos Moises Triminio, age 28. Prosecutor Luis Echeverria said that Triminio was left unattended for over 30 minutes on the highway, receiving medical attention, and ultimately died. Forensic results reveal that he had a deep wound in the femoral artery and therefore, bled to death. However, Echeverria did not say that this was being investigated as a hit and run case. After conducting three scene reconstructions prosecutors decided that they had enough proof to charge Martinez Midence with aggravated homicide, particularly since she was under the influence of alcohol. According to the Penal Code, the crime of aggravated homicide has a term from 5 to 8 years in jail.

Human Rights Commission Office Registers Observers

¶14. The representatives of the National Human Rights Commission were the first to register September 29 with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) as domestic observers in the upcoming November 27 general elections. These observers will travel on election day to different areas of the country in order to witness the electoral process, register irregularities and complaints, and if the electoral process should proceed without any incidents, serve as transparency witnesses in the process.

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